

ART. XLVIII.—*Annual Report of the Surgeon-General, United States Army, 1876.*

FROM this interesting document we glean the following particulars:—

The monthly reports of sick and wounded represent an average mean strength of 21,681 white, and 2002 coloured, troops.

Among the *white troops*, the total number of cases on the sick list was 37,561, being at the rate of 1732 per 1000 of mean strength. Of this number, 32,495, or 1499 per 1000 of mean, were taken on sick report for disease, and 5066, or 233 per thousand of strength, for wounds, accidents, and injuries of all kinds.

The total number of deaths from all causes was 518, or 24 per 1000 of mean strength. Of these, 180, or 8 per 1000, died of disease, and 338, or 16 per 1000, of wounds, accidents, and injuries.

The total number of white soldiers discharged on surgeon's certificate for disability was 561, or 26 per thousand, and precisely the same of coloured soldiers.

Among the *coloured troops*, the total number of cases of all kinds was 3462, being at the rate of 1729 per thousand of mean strength. Of these, 2941, or 1469 per 1000, were cases of disease, and 521, or 260 per thousand, were wounds, accidents, or injuries.

The total number of deaths from all causes was 26, or 13 per 1000 of mean strength. Of these, 16, or 8 per thousand, died of disease, and 10, or 5 per 1000, of wounds, accidents, or injuries.

"It will be seen from the foregoing that the health of the army during the year has been good, and the mortality from disease unusually small. On the other hand, the number of deaths from wounds has been exceptionally large. The figures given above include two hundred and sixty-seven (267) officers and men killed in battle or skirmishes with hostile Indians, who are not embraced in the number of cases of wounds, accidents, and injuries taken on sick report. Of this number, fifteen (15) commissioned officers, including one (1) medical officer (Assistant-Surgeon George E. Lord, U. S. Army), one (1) Acting Assisting-Surgeon (James M. De Wolf), and two hundred and thirty-two (232) enlisted men, fell in the action on the Little Big Horn River on June 25th."

Strong testimony is borne as to the policy of promptly removing any garrison threatened with yellow fever to a healthy locality.

"On the 1st Oct. 1875, a case of yellow fever, which proved fatal next day, was recognized in the hospital of Company E, 3d Infantry, at Coushatta, Louisiana. The greater part of the company was promptly moved, October 2d, and went into camp at Springville, two miles distant. The portion of the command thus moved entirely escaped; but thirteen (13) additional cases, and eight (8) deaths, occurred in the detachment left at Coushatta with the hospital and company property. Three of the laundresses also had the fever, and one of them died. The last case occurred November 20th, and the last death November 23d. Assistant-Surgeon R. Barnett, U. S. A., who was in charge of the hospital during this epidemic, reports that he was unable to ascertain the mode of its introduction. It is well known, however, that yellow fever had been prevailing as an epidemic at New Orleans, and the situation of this post on the Red River would suggest the probability of the importation of the disease from that place."

The work performed in the Record and Pension Division is stated to be behindhand, owing to the inadequate clerical force provided. By legislation at the last session of Congress, that force, instead of being increased, has been still further reduced by the discharge of 26 clerks.

The continuation of the surgical portion of the Medical and Surgical History of the War, and the compilation of descriptive catalogues of the surgical and anatomical materials of the Army Medical Museum, have been prosecuted with a reduced clerical force. The amount of labour accomplished with this restricted means is remarkable.

"To the material collected at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1875, for a report of surgical cases treated in the army during the period 1871-75, one thousand six hundred and seven (1607) cases have been added, making a total now collected of four thousand and ninety-three (4093) surgical cases, comprising one thousand seven hundred and twenty-seven (1727) injuries of the head and neck, three hundred and sixty-six (366) injuries of the trunk, one thousand one hundred and eleven (1111) injuries of the extremities, including two hundred and eighty-six (286) amputations and twenty-four (24) excisions, and eight hundred and eighty-nine (889) miscellaneous injuries, a mass of valuable surgical information, well worthy of publication."

The important government medical library is steadily being enlarged.

"About 2000 volumes, exclusive of pamphlets, have been added to the library during the past year. The subject catalogue, to which reference was made in my last annual report, is now nearly completed, and during the year there were printed and distributed a few copies of a specimen *fasciculus* of this catalogue, which were issued in order to obtain the opinions of those competent to judge as to whether it is desirable that such a work shall be printed and distributed, and also for criticism and suggestions as to the form of catalogue which would be most acceptable and useful. The responses, in the form of editorials, critical notices, resolutions of medical societies, letters, etc., have been so numerous, so favourable to the general plan adopted, and so unanimous in the expression of opinion that the entire work ought to be printed as soon as possible, as being of great value to medical writers and teachers not only of this country but throughout the world, that I am fully warranted in strongly recommending that Congress authorize the printing of the work by the government printer. The MSS. is in such a state of forwardness that copy can be furnished to the printer within a month after such authority is granted, and can be furnished thereafter as rapidly as the proofs can be properly read."

In hoping that Congress will at once provide the funds for the publication of the subject catalogue of the library, we are sure we express the sentiment of our entire profession. Such a work will be invaluable to students, and contribute immensely to the advancement of our science. Its utility will not be confined to the profession—the public will reap the benefit of it.

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ART. XLIX.—*A Century of American Medicine. 1776-1876.* By EDWARD H. CLARKE, M.D., late Professor of Materia Medica in Harvard University, etc.; HENRY J. BIGELOW, M.D., Prof. of Surgery in Harvard University, etc.; SAMUEL D. GROSS, M.D., LL.D., D.C.L. Oxon., Prof. of Surgery in Jefferson Medical College, Phila., etc.; T. GAILLARD THOMAS, M.D., Prof. of Obstetrics, etc., in Col. of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, etc.; and J. S. BILLINGS, M.D., Librarian to the National Medical Library, Washington, D. C. Royal 12mo., pp. 366. Philadelphia: Henry C. Lea, 1876.

THE essays comprising this volume originally appeared in the pages of this Journal during the past year, and therefore do not require an introduction to our readers. It is believed that they truthfully reflect the progress of medicine in our country during the past century, and that they are in every respect worthy of the reputation of their authors. The general commendation which they have elicited has induced Mr. Lea to reprint them in handsome form as a worthy memento of the first century of American Medicine.